

## Living in a Pressure Cooker

April 7, 2019 | Pastor Barry Buzza

**Big Idea:** There are times in each of our lives when we feel so much pressure that we think we will burst.

In our reading in 2<sup>nd</sup> Samuel, we see that David suffered a lapse of faith while in Gath (wine press - a place of extreme pressure), Philistine territory for eighteen months. He pretended he was insane so that the King of Philistia would not consider him as a threat. There was something he learned during that period which he may not have learned otherwise.

**Scripture:** David penned Psalm 34 during this challenging time.

*The Lord is near to the brokenhearted and saves the crushed in spirit.*

*Many are the afflictions of the righteous, but the Lord delivers him out of them all. He keeps all his bones; not one of them is broken.*

Psalms 34:18c-20 ESV

Hezekiah was one of the great Kings of Judah, but he lived in a time when Israel, to the north, had given in to the invading Assyrians. King Sennacherib laid siege on Jerusalem, the Capital of Judah and Hezekiah felt the squeeze of death. Through verbal intimidation and military might, the Assyrians surrounded Jerusalem with 185,000 soldiers. It looked like the end of the Kingdom which had been established under King David. The prophets Isaiah and Micah prayed for Hezekiah and the

Kingdom, and God did a miracle which has been celebrated as one of the most famous military victories of all time.

During that time, Hezekiah's worship team penned a psalm which teaches us how to think when we are, or we feel like we are, being squeezed to the brink of death.

*God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble.*

*Therefore we will not fear though the earth gives way,*

*Though the mountains be moved into the heart of the sea,*

*though its waters roar and foam,*

*Though the mountains tremble at its swelling.*

*Selah*

*There is a river whose streams make glad the city of God,*

*The holy habitation of the Most High.*

*God is in the midst of her; she shall not be moved;*

*God will help her when morning dawns.*

*The nations rage, the kingdoms totter;*

*He utters his voice, the earth melts.*

*The Lord of hosts is with us;*

*The God of Jacob is our fortress. Selah*

*Come, behold the works of the Lord,*

*How he has brought desolations on the earth.*

*He makes wars cease to the end of the earth;*

*He breaks the bow and shatters the spear;*

*He burns the chariots with fire.*

*“Be still, and know that I am God.*

*I will be exalted among the nations, I will be exalted in the earth!”*

*The Lord of hosts is with us;*

*The God of Jacob is our fortress. Selah*

Psalms 46 ESV

## **God is on our side**

*God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble.*

The Lord is the one to whom we can retreat for refuge when we are in trouble. As Hezekiah discovered, the Lord will often use the trouble we are in to teach us a greater truth.

*O Lord, by these things men live,*

*And in all these is the life of my spirit.*

*Oh restore me to health and make me live!*

*Behold, it was for my welfare that I had great bitterness;*

*But in love you have delivered my life from the pit of destruction,*

*For you have cast all my sins behind your back.*

Isaiah 38:16c-17 ESV

## **The Lord is by our side**

*The river is a symbol of the presence of God. The Holy Spirit is with us to sustain us we like Hezekiah experienced, we can confidently expect him to intervene, maybe not like we planned. We need to remain expectant that God will rescue us.*

*There is a river whose streams make glad the city of God,*

*The holy habitation of the Most High.*

*God is in the midst of her; she shall not be moved;*

*God will help her when morning dawns.*

*... The Lord of hosts is with us;*

*The God of Jacob is our fortress. Selah*

## **He gives his peace inside us**

He is not only on our side, and by our side, but he gives us his peace inside. Peace is the result

of knowing that, in God, we have adequate resources to face anything.

*Peace I leave with you; my peace I give to you. Not as the world gives do I give to you. Let not your hearts be troubled, neither let them be afraid.* John 14:27 ESV

*“Be still, and know that I am God. I will be exalted among the nations, I will be exalted in the earth!”*

*The Lord of hosts is with us;  
The God of Jacob is our fortress. Selah*  
Psalm 46:10-11 ESV